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## Office of Recovery Newsletter | February 11, 2022

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February 11, 2022



This week's edition of the Office of Recovery Newsletter features an article that details the release of the Building a Stronger Economy (BASE) program application. This program offers matching funding for economic development projects that are focused on expanding the state's base of businesses and residents.

We have also provided an update on the Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas (SPARK) Investment Idea Submission Form deadline and the SPARK Advisory Panel Kick-off meetings held last week.

Also included is an article highlighting three programs funded through a \$1B investment from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that will provide grants to rural areas for the improvement of essential facilities.

For the latest information about resources available to Kansans, see the "Updates to Services and Support" section of this newsletter. For the most up-to-date information, please visit the Office of Recovery website at: [COVID.ks.gov](https://COVID.ks.gov).

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## SPARK Updates



## Department of Commerce Releases BASE Program Application

The [Building a Stronger Economy \(BASE\) Program grant application](#) opened on Monday, February 1, 2022. BASE is a new grant opportunity to help support infrastructure development and advance economic development opportunities across Kansas.

The grant program will be administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce. As proposed by the Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas (SPARK) Executive Committee, the program offers matching funds to address economic development opportunities with the goal of expanding the state's base of businesses and residents as we continue to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In December 2021, the SPARK Executive Committee approved \$100M in available federal COVID-19 relief funding for eligible economic development and infrastructure proposals. Projects that qualify under the requirements of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) may receive matching funds to facilitate project completion.

County and local governments, Economic Development Organizations, local Chambers of Commerce, and other stakeholders are eligible to apply. Awardees will be provided with 50% of award allocation in calendar year 2022. The remaining 50% of funding will be provided no earlier than January 2023.

Projects to be funded by BASE would support infrastructure investments associated with economic development projects including:

- Development of new business parks
- Development of infrastructure required to support business expansions
- Renovation of existing business parks to bring them up to modern standards

- Development of infrastructure such as railroad spurs, water, wastewater, stormwater and other utilities
- Driveway aprons
- Business park signage
- Parking facilities directly associated with business attraction projects
- Speculative industrial office and residential space
- Development of infrastructure related to cybersecurity investments
- Other projects that achieve the goal of expanding the state's base of businesses and residents.

An informational webinar on BASE will be available to the public on Wednesday, February 16 at 3:00 p.m. Registration for the webinar, recording of the previous webinar, and guidelines for the grant application can be found at [kansascommerce.gov/basegrant/](https://kansascommerce.gov/basegrant/)

The BASE grant application process will close on Monday, February 28, at 11:59 p.m. Grant awardees will be announced no earlier than March 25, 2022. Applicants can contact [CommerceSPARK@ks.gov](mailto:CommerceSPARK@ks.gov) for any questions regarding this funding opportunity.





## Get Involved with the SPARK Process

### **SPARK Investment Idea Submission Form Deadline: February 16, 2022**

The Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas (SPARK) Executive Committee has launched an online submission form for proposing investment ideas, which can be accessed [here](#). The submission period will close on February 16, 2022. The four SPARK Advisory Panels may consider these submissions as part of the process to determine investment priorities and make recommendations to the SPARK Executive Committee. To learn more about the SPARK process, [click here](#).

An FAQ document on the submission form is [available here](#). If there are any questions on completing the submission form, please contact [SPARKtaskforce@ks.gov](mailto:SPARKtaskforce@ks.gov).

### **SPARK Advisory Panels Hold Kick-off Meetings**

The SPARK Advisory Panels held virtual kickoff meetings on Friday, February 4, and Monday, February 7. The four panels (Health & Education, Economic Revitalization, Connectivity, and Efficiency & Modernization) will assist the SPARK Executive Committee in developing recommendations for the distribution of federal COVID-19 relief funds. The recordings of these meetings and meeting materials are available here: [Advisory Panels Materials](#). All future meetings will be live streamed on the [Kansas Office of Recovery YouTube page](#).

If you have any questions, please visit <https://covid.ks.gov/> and click on “Contact Us” on the top right corner.

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## Program Spotlight



## **USDA Funds Provide Programs for Rural Areas in Kansas**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced an investment of \$1B to improve community infrastructure for people living in rural towns across the country. This investment is funding several open programs in Kansas and across the country for the development, improvement and staffing of essential community facilities in rural areas. The following programs are open for Kansans to apply for funding.

### **Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program**

This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and/or improve essential community facilities, purchase equipment and pay related project expenses. Rural areas including cities, villages, townships and towns including Federally Recognized Tribal Lands with no more than 20,000 residents are eligible for this program. To learn more about this program, [click here](#).

### **Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program**

This program provides loan guarantees to eligible lenders to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. Funds can be used to construct, enlarge, extend or otherwise improve essential community facilities.

Guarantee funds can also be used for refinancing the debt of an essential community facility. This program is intended for lending institutions such as banks, credit unions, mortgage companies, etc. To learn more about this program, [click here](#).

## **Economic Impact Initiative Grants**

This program provides funding to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural communities with extreme unemployment and severe economic depression. These grants can be used to construct, enlarge or improve community facilities for health care, public safety and public service. All public bodies, non-profits, and federally recognized tribal government are eligible to apply. To learn more about this program, [click here](#).

You can find other open funding opportunities on our website: [Available Funding Opportunities](#). If you have any questions, please visit <https://covid.ks.gov/> and click on “Contact Us” on the top right corner.

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## **Updates to Services and Support**



### **Compliance Supplement Addendum Overview Webinar**

The Office of Recovery will be hosting a webinar on Wednesday, February

16, at 11 a.m. This webinar will review the Compliance Supplement Addendum that was recently released and the distinction between vendors, subrecipients and beneficiaries.

You can register for this webinar here: [Webinar Registration](#)

## **Compliance Resource Library Updated**

The Office of Recovery website offers a library of resources called the [Compliance Resource Library](#), which is meant to assist state agencies, local governments, and other stakeholders with receiving, expending and reporting American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. A few of the existing job aids have been updated due to the release of the SLFRF Final Rule. The updated documents can be found below:

- [Grant Compliance Checklist and Guide](#): This tool is a checklist/guide for overall grant compliance - ARPA, SLFRF and Uniform Guidance. Includes expenditure allowability, reporting, internal controls, uniform guidance and closeout.
- [Subrecipient, Beneficiary, or Contractor Checklist](#): This document helps to distinguish between the definitions and roles of subrecipient, contractor, and beneficiary.
- [Subrecipient Award/Agreement Checklist](#): This checklist is a guide for creating a Notice of Grant Award.

The full Compliance Resource Library can be viewed [here](#).

# Contact the RO

The Office of Recovery is here to offer support and coordination. Questions and inquiries may be submitted via the [Contact Us form](#). Please visit [covid.ks.gov](https://covid.ks.gov) for up-to-date information and resources on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic for Kansas residents, businesses, and communities.

[Question/Request Form](#)

**DeAngela Burns-Wallace, Ed.D.**

Secretary, Kansas Department of Administration

On behalf of the Office of Recovery,

Kansas Governor Laura Kelly

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